



## Consulate General of the United States of America Chiang Mai, Thailand

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Press Release

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### **U.S. Confident in Prospective Growth of Thailand's Creative Economy** *Supports Developing Strategies on—* *3G, Intellectual Property Rights, Education and Investment Fundamentals*

Today (Feb 18) U.S. Ambassador Eric G. John, Deputy Minister of Commerce Alongkorn Ponlaboot and Chiang Mai Governor Amonrapun Nimanandh joined the opening of an international conference on “Northern Thailand’s Creative Economy: Opportunities and Challenges in the IT Sector,” held at the Shangri-La Hotel, Chiang Mai. The U.S. Ambassador’s opening remarks addressed the role of IT and the Creative Economy in the U.S.-Thai economic relationship, while Deputy Minister Alongkorn’s keynote address highlighted Thailand’s vision of IT and the Creative Economy.

The Conference, held during the U.S. Consulate’s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, aims to link U.S. and northern Thai IT firms in order to build new business partnerships, boost the recruiting of northern Thailand’s IT talent, and lay the foundation for sales, service, and investment opportunities. It is organized by the U.S. Consulate General, Chiang Mai, in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy Bangkok and the Chiang Mai provincial government, as well as associated organizations—Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA), the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce, Chiang Mai University’s Department of Computer Engineering, and the Public Relations Office Region 3 Chiang Mai.

Ambassador John praised Thailand’s efforts to encourage the growth of creativity and innovation. He said Thailand is developing useful strategies such as: building a modern telecommunications system by pushing forward with 3G, improving the protection of intellectual property rights, fostering creativity and innovation through the Thai education system, and supporting foreign investment with incentives, infrastructure development and efficient regulations. The U.S. Ambassador also added that northern Thailand is uniquely positioned as a base for IT growth as the region’s many universities create the human capital that fuels innovation.

The Northern Thailand Creative Economy IT Conference has attracted over 200 participants from the private, public, and academic sectors. This includes representatives from large American IT companies such as Microsoft, Oracle, and SAS Software, as well as IBM, which opened its new office in Chiang Mai on February 17. The aim of the conference is to get more American IT firms involved in making Chiang Mai even bigger and stronger as an IT hub.

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